THINK AND ACT FAMILY

Conseil de la famille

A guide for Public and Private Organizations

Québec

90-04481/2

THINK AND ACT FAMILY

A Guide
for Public and Private Organizations

PART ONE:
The family approach and its application

PART TWO:
Criteria for evaluating the family approach, for use by families, companies, organizations, municipalities and departments

Opinion given by the Conseil de la famille
to the Minister for the Status of Women,
responsible for Family Policy

Opinion No. 89.2

This opinion was adopted by the Conseil de la famille at its 8th meeting and submitted to Thérèse Lavoie-Roux, Minister for Health and Social Services and Minister responsible for Family Policy on September 20, 1989, in keeping with section 15.(2) of the Act respecting the Conseil de la famille.

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Note: In this text the masculine form is taken to include the feminine, where appropriate.

Legal deposit
Bibliothèque nationale du Québec
4th quarter 1989
ISBN

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The Québec family has undergone profound changes over the past twenty years and has been the subject of much concern. In 1967, the first family allowances were issued by the Québec government, the International Union of Family Organizations held its congress in Québec City and people still remembered historian Toynbee's prediction that, at the end of the world, the planet would belong to the Chinese...and Québec!

In 1967, the Minister of the Family, Jean-Paul Cloutier, asked Philippe Garigue, Chairman of the Family Superior Council, to prepare the ground for a family policy in Québec. Despite a good many difficulties, this project did not sink into oblivion, thanks to the courage and vision of a few leaders, both men and women, and, perhaps even more, thanks to the tenacity of hundreds, even thousands, of citizens, not all of them members of family associations. The Policy Paper on the Family adopted by the Québec government in December 1987 following the work of the Advisory Committee on Family Policy takes on its full meaning in this context.

In the preamble to the act constituting the Conseil de la famille, the National Assembly stated that:

> ...the family is the first cultural and social environment in which every individual is born and (...) the welfare of society is based on the welfare of the family and of the individuals composing it;
>
> ...the social contribution of the parents in assuming responsibility for the family and in caring for children merits the support and encouragement of society as a whole;

> ...it is expedient to provide a forum for families, their representatives or groups or institutions that are concerned by matters pertaining to the family;
>
> ...it is expedient to set up an organization, on the basis of those principles, to advise the Minister on matters pertaining to the family.[1]

Québec's family policy was thus shepherded through an important stage; it now had a foundation, supported by the National Assembly, on which future developments could be based. These merit close attention.

The recently created Conseil de la famille is hereby submitting a working document which should enable not only our elected representatives and administrators at the various levels of government, but also the authorities in various sectors--recreation, business, service--to whom appeals are made for support for the family, to appreciate the family content of the policies, programs and services created for the family.

The Council's opinion is given in two parts. Part One explains the context in which the family policy operates. It recalls the guidelines and objectives adopted by the Conseil des ministres and situates the family and family policy in the context of today's society. It then goes on to initiate the reader to the concept of evaluation as developed within the government, ending with a few comments on creativity in evaluation and identifying the points which remain to be settled.

Part Two consists of an evaluation grid or frame of reference for evaluating policies, programs and services from the point of view of the family. This is intended as a tool for anyone

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1 An Act respecting the Conseil de la famille, S.Q. 1988, c. 6.

concerned with the family approach. Family criteria are developed and the Conseil de la famille suggests questions that can serve to verify whether these criteria are respected. The Conseil then indicates the steps that should be taken to carry out a coherent and meaningful evaluation. This evaluation grid is justified since most government policies have some kind of an impact on the family, just as they do on the economy.

The Conseil de la famille has not only created a tool it will be the first to use, but at the same time it has defined the main objectives towards which it will strive in the years to come. This opinion is meant to encourage everyone at every level of authority and in every field of activity to begin **thinking and acting family** without delay. This tool is not perfect; it must be improved and, in order to be improved, it must be used to spur the harmonious growth of support for Québec parents advocated by a family policy.

Bernard Fortin
Chairman

PART ONE

The family approach and its application

For some years already, there has been talk of a family policy for Québec. At first, it was seen as something rather abstract and general, although inspired by very real concerns. As the years went by, the advocates of a family policy managed to pinpoint their objectives and extend their network of allies. There is a better understanding today, both by the government and the public, of what a family requires and how badly a family policy is needed. There is also a broader knowledge of what has been accomplished in this area and a growing realization of the extent and complexity of what remains to be done. **Thinking and acting family** is a real challenge for all concerned, a challenge that is also a survival test for our whole society.

This first part of the opinion submitted by the Conseil explains the issues in Québec's family policy and describes certain aspects of the evaluation of policies, programs and services.

CHAPTER ONE

THE GUIDELINES ADOPTED BY THE CONSEIL DES MINISTRES

On December 3, 1987, the Conseil des ministres defined the guidelines for Québec's family policy. It was a brief but crucial statement: given the complexity of the family situation, and the difficulties families must deal with, the government recognized the need for collective support. In concrete terms, the government must henceforth **think and act family**, taking the reality of family life into account in all its policies.[2]

1.1 General objectives and administrative action

Specifically, the general objective is to "recognize the importance of the family as an institution and living environment, notably through collective support to parents, who are those members of society most directly responsible for childrearing and the family environment".[3] To this end, the government undertakes

- **to think and act family** in each government department and agency;

- to ensure cooperation between Québec government departments and agencies;

- to promote cooperation with other levels of government and with groups responsible for providing support for families;

- to listen to what families have to say.

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2 QUÉBEC, Secrétariat à la politique familiale, **Statement of orientations and administrative structure of the Gouvernement du Québec, Family Policy**, adopted by the Conseil des ministres on December 3, 1987, p. 12.

3 Ibid., p. 9.

A minister responsible for developing family policy was appointed, and a Secrétariat à la famille created to help the minister coordinate the horizontal development of family policy. The Conseil de la famille was also created to work with the minister in the interests of the family on any matter of family interest and, particularly, to foster ongoing and constructive dialogue with families. Those departments and agencies most closely involved with the family must:

- set up the administrative machinery necessary to integrate the family factor into the policies for which they are responsible;

- regularly plan activities, commitments and measures to make the integration of the family factor a reality;

- in their annual report, account for the development of the family policy in all the areas for which they were responsible.

The Québec government sought to lead the way with this public commitment to **think and act family.** At the same time, it invited the social sector to help support the indispensable role of parents. The authorities in the labour market and in municipal life, for instance, were also approached to help in this undertaking which had to be a decidedly collective effort.

Henceforth, all organizations--firms, agencies, municipalities and departments--must keep the family perspective in view. Following the consultation held by Maurice Champagne in 1984 and 1985, the theme **think and act family** became self-evident and was recommended to the government and the public for Québec parents.

1.2 Coordinating governmental and other action

Several government departments and agencies were identified[4] as central since the policies they draw up generally have a direct or indirect impact on families.

These departments and agencies must consult each other and work together so that the objectives set by the government are not simultaneously promoted by one minister and blocked by another, as has often been the case in the past.

Consultation is not easy. It is a major challenge, especially since family policy touches the most deep-set values of the population. A study commissioned by the Conseil québécois de la recherche sociale stated, in this respect:

> **There is no such thing as a neutral family policy: it necessarily favours one or more views of the family; it refers to a vision of human life, of the person, of interpersonal relations and of society in general; these views carry with them a certain number of values that are considered important: economic, social, cultural and moral values; values that are implemented through regulations, policies or legislation that determine what action is taken in a given area.**[5]

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4 A partial list of departments and agencies was drawn up: Affaires culturelles, Affaires municipales, Communautés culturelles et Immigration, Communications, Conseil du trésor, Conseil exécutif (Secrétariat à la condition féminine, Secrétariat aux Affaires autochtones, Secrétariat à la jeunesse, Aménagement et développement régional), Éducation, Enseignement supérieur et Science, Environnement, Finances, Justice, Loisir, Chasse et Pêche, Main d'Oeuvre et Sécurité du revenu, Office des ressources humaines, Office des services de garde à l'enfance, Revenu, Santé et Services sociaux, Société des établissements de plein air du Québec, Société d'Habitation du Québec, Sécurité publique, Tourisme, Travail.

5 UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À RIMOUSKI, GROUPE DE RECHERCHE ETHOS, **La dimension éthique de la recherche sociale**, Study commissioned by the Conseil québécois de la recherche sociale, Rimouski, 1988, p. 4.

In Québec, it is clear that the State is concerned with families as well as the birthrate, and that it has made decisive choices. The Québec government has accepted the responsibility for family policy, but it wants to share it with other agencies responsible for collective support for families, such as the federal government, the municipal governments and all the other agents of change in the working community and the education sector, the health and social services network, community and family organizations, professional groups, the media and others.[6]

This is a collective and a historical challenge here which must be picked up, since the family policy will determine Québec's future, beyond any preoccupation about the birth-rate, but in the interest of our children and in keeping with our values:

> **Now, more than ever before, families have an opportunity for enlightened social support which could be of particular help to parents in doing their job. Families need only draw on what is most natural in human beings and on the best that society has to offer in the area of teachings on human individual development, human relations and life in society.**[7]

This huge responsibility to support parents in their role requires tools for measuring trends in family policy and evaluating the extent to which policy objectives are met as well as the objectives of each program that targets families or affects the family in any way. It is a question of coherence and effectiveness.

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6 An example of a project in which those concerned got involved: the **Regroupement inter-organismes pour une politique familiale** has already fed into its data bank the text of 205 laws and programs, the family content of which has been briefly evaluated.

7 QUÉBEC, Secrétariat à la politique familiale, op. cit., p. 16.

The opinion of the Conseil de la famille contributes to a process for following up on the development of a family policy in which all partners provide increased support for parents in Québec, helping them in their responsibilities towards their children and family life.

CHAPTER TWO

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Profound changes in society affect the modern family and create new challenges for our institutions. Meanwhile, family life goes on and family members continue to give each other a hand, but under increasingly difficult circumstances. The family policy must find a way to support and strengthen families without impinging on their privacy and without endeavouring to usurp their place; it must also give rise to programs adapted to the family's needs.

2.1 The family and its prime functions

It is universally agreed that the family is the basic unit of society, a place of fundamental learning and the essential interface between the person and society. Because of the different kinds of family structures in today's society or because of a desire to highlight a particular facet of the family, definitions of the family proliferate and can give rise to endless debates between the adherents of a standard or ideal definition and those who want to define as a family any group of people who live together. The family reality is definitely complex and not easily circumscribed. It can be restricted to the parent-child nucleus or extended to include more distant relatives and other generations. Family solidarity often has no limits.

The Civil Code does not define the family. The departments that define the family do so within the context of a specific law they must administer, which accounts for the difference between the definition of the family used for taxation purposes and the one used for social aid.[8]

The family policy targets the family as "the nucleus of our society and the individual's first contact with learning and socialization"[9], the meeting point between the individual and society. Thus, from a practical point of view, and to attain the irreductible unit of the family, the government defines the family as the parent-child relationship, or, more precisely, the actual taking charge by one or more adults of the children and the home.

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8 More elaborate definitions can be found in the following documents:

- QUÉBEC, CONSEIL DES AFFAIRES SOCIALES ET DE LA FAMILLE, **La situation des familles québécoises,** Québec, 1978, p. 24.
- QUÉBEC, COMITÉ PERMANENT DU DÉVELOPPEMENT SOCIAL, **For Québec families,** Québec, October 1984, pp. 33-40 (green paper).
- QUÉBEC, COMITÉ DE LA CONSULTATION SUR LA POLITIQUE FAMILIALE, **Report on the Consultation held on Family Policy,** Québec. 1986.

  Part one, **Collective support demanded for Québec families,** April 1986, pp. 34-38.

  Part two, **Le soutien collectif recommandé pour les parents québécois,** April 1986, p. 39.
- QUÉBEC, MUSÉE DE LA CIVILISATION, **Pour une définition de la famille,** document no. 1, Québec, 1989, pp. 5 ff.

9 QUÉBEC, Secrétariat à la politique familiale, op. cit., p. 7.

The government's preoccupation with the elderly is not included in this context. The family policy is aimed at the parent-child relationship. However, the government is increasingly concerned with senior citizens as is clearly demonstrated, for example, by its recent mental health policy. The Conseil de la famille does intend, however, to integrate this dimension into its work.

No matter what definition is used, the family takes on duties and responsibilities that no other institution can deal with more successfully, and society is the first to benefit. The following functions are usually attributed to the family: reproduction, socialization, producing and purchasing, and creating ties of affection, or, more specifically,

- bringing children into the world and rearing them;
- giving individuals a sense of identity and of belonging to society;
- meeting the primary needs of food, lodging, clothing, physical protection and affection;
- giving basic training to the adults of tomorrow in areas such as physical and mental health, civic duty and social and religious morality;
- taking care of vulnerable members who require assistance.

In the years following the Quiet Revolution, it was believed that the State could carry out a good many of these functions. It has since been realized that things must be done differently and that, while the State cannot be relieved of its responsibilities, families must still be allowed to assume their identity and to support each other as best they can. While families receive much from their members, they also give much to society.

2.2 The need for a family policy

The Conseil will not describe here the many reefs on which today's families can founder and which have prompted the government to make certain commitments. It wants to point out the relevance of the overall direction it plans to give family policy by seeing that all spheres of family life are taken into consideration.

Family policy, in Québec, means a **policy of support for parents.** For a broader definition, to guide people working in the field, reference can be made to Bernard Lory, Secretary General of the International Union of Family Organizations, who, at the Helsinki Congress held from June 21 to 23, 1976, described family policy as a set of measures and actions that enable families to face their responsibilities and meet their own economic, educational, affective and social needs. A more detailed definition is given in the Report of the Comité de consultation sur la politique familiale.

A family policy should not deal solely with problems. It should address the family as a living force, an autonomous entity whose dynamic character is essential to the well-being of society. Anything to do with education, employment, housing, mental and physical health, recreation, the environment, the law and so forth would thus profit hugely from being considered with the family in mind.

Families, of course, enjoy the collaboration of schools, hospitals, CLSCs, support groups, day care services and so on in carrying out their duties. These are basic services, resources our society can offer the family. What matters is the spirit in which these services are made available and offered to the family, and the respect and consideration given parents, who are responsible for their children.

All society benefits when families play their role effectively. The family policy thus encourages the State to accompany parents in their responsibilities and support them in their duties. Any major intervention should be reserved for situations in which parents are unable to perform adequately. The point, then, is to **think and act family.**

2.3 Think and act family

To think and act family means to see that parents have the means, the support and the motivation necessary to play their role and assume their responsibilities.

However, most policies and programs, even those where the mandate is to meet the needs of families, are aimed at individuals. The approach is not necessarily family-oriented. These policies and programs must be rethought so that assistance is not restricted to one member of a family when the whole family context should be evaluated and worked on.[10]

For example, in the health and social services sector, each time a personalized service plan is drawn up, whether for a senior citizen entering a reception centre, or a handicapped person being reintegrated into the mainstream, or a teenager referred to the Director of Youth Protection, administrative procedures should not be so time-consuming that they make it difficult for social workers to contact the family and obtain its help in finding the best solution.

The family approach, as pressing and essential as it may be, is not always easy to apply. The real issues are not always easy to identify or to defend. Could our taxation system, for

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10 For a moving example, see Debbie's story in the **Rapport d'activités 1986-87** of the Comité de Protection de la jeunesse, pp. 37-38.

example, possibly be rendered more advantageous for the family? And social aid in Québec--could a handicapped person not be permitted to move in with his brother, whose income is very low, without losing his social aid benefits? To deal with this type of situation, must the government treat people as individuals so that they can live as part of a family?[11] In any case, our society would benefit from fewer programs geared towards the individual on the premise that families will gain by them, and more programs for families, which would benefit each individual member.

The desire to take the family into consideration when preparing programs and policies is not necessarily an invasion of privacy. There are already a good many laws and regulations that affect various aspects of our lives. **Think family** may mean that the government will intervene more in certain cases and less in others. Minimal government action at the right moment could prevent the need for major measures to alleviate a crisis. This is a complex point that merits attentive examination by all concerned. The family approach should foster rather than undermine the debate.

Despite a certain conformism in consumption models, Québec no longer presents the homogeneous profile that characterized it before the Quiet Revolution. Our society has become pluralist in more than one respect, and it is a moot point whether Quebecers have enough values in common to enable them to **think family.** There are tendencies, of course, from time to time, exploited by one ideology or another. But there nevertheless seems to be a general consensus in Québec on certain fundamental realities. Surveys among young people are

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11 On this subject, see also Margrit EICHLER, "The familism-individualism flip-flop and its implications for economic and social welfare policies", in **XXth International Committee on Family Research Seminar on Social Change and Family Policies**, Part 2, Melbourne, Australia, August 19-24, 1984, pp. 431-472.

revealing. Typical family values such as satisfying relations with one's parents and the desire to have a family of one's own one day are alive and well. In general, people agree on the problems to be dealt with and the major objectives to be reached.

There is disagreement too, which is normal, but this centres mainly around the means to reach the end. Young and old, conservatives and radicals, all agree on the need to give a hand to low-income heads of families, to working parents, to families that are the victims of violence, to young people in need of protection and support. The disagreement arises when the method of attaining these objectives is discussed. Thus, everyone may agree that day care services are needed, but there may be very little agreement as to the amount to be invested, the type of service to be offered, the category of person to be served and the justification for serving it.

There is a general consensus on many other family issues: the obligation to pay support, the obligation for employers to ease the way for employees with family responsibilities, the need to help teenage parents become autonomous, the need for universal family measures, such as family allowances, no matter what the family income is, and so on.

2.4 How to think family

The government is justified in wanting to **think family.** The need is no longer in doubt. But that is not the end of it. The next question is how to **think family** in the extremely varied situations with which the government must deal. Who and what will guide the decision-makers in determining whether a measure or a program is family-oriented or not? Even if they take the advice of those who are best informed, there is no guarantee that the proposed solutions will really be to the advantage of families. In the past, the individual has often

received more attention than the family, or else corporate interests have unconsciously been defended.

In order to make the right decisions for families, politicians must have recent, objective information and impartial non-partisan analyses that systematically and constantly provide an update of:

- the changes experienced by families and the implications of those changes for government policy;

- the impact of current or planned policies on the family;

- how, by working with families, family-based policies may be created or established.

There is no lack of examples of organizations created especially to help the government implement certain policies on a priority basis: the Conseil de la langue francaise, the Conseil du statut de la femme, and so forth. The State has created a great many tools to promote economic development. Similar efforts are being made to protect the environment. Our neighbours to the south have been holding monthly seminars in Washington, D.C., since November 1988 in order to give Congressmen and the Executive complete, precise, up-to-date information on issues that affect the family. These meetings are organized by the Family Impact Seminar which, this year, will provide the same service for any states requesting it. And, at the United Nations, guidelines for drawing up programs to reinforce the family are characterized by the same desire to **think family:**

> **National family policies and corresponding programs aimed at the family as a unit are directly affected by existing socioeconomic conditions and structures. They must be established within the context of social programs and policies covering such areas as population, social protection, labour, housing, social security, health and nutrition, agriculture, land reform, urbanization, industrialization and rural development. Programs and policies of this type must take the family into account as a unit and their potential effect on families must be examined.**
> **(...)**
> **Policies and programs designed for family members, specifically for women, children, young people, handicapped people and the elderly, must insist on the fact that families as units have their own dynamics and are primary resources for satisfying the needs of these groups; if policies and programs do not taken this into account, they are doomed to failure.**[12]

When someone has a problem, his family cannot ignore it for long. The family is often affected and must be involved in the search for a solution. Official representatives must use a wide-angle lens in order to see not only the individual but his entire family context. Generally, the best way to help someone is to get the members of his family involved, so that they support any action taken rather than fight it.

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12 UNITED NATIONS, DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, CENTRE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, **La famille**, no 4, "Renforcer la famille: directives en vue de l'élaboration de programmes à cet effet", New York, 1987, p. 45.

Think family applies to all levels of government. The recent commitment[13] made by the presidents of the two municipal unions to promote the adoption of a family policy in their municipalities is proof of this.

These two unions encourage the municipalities to create a committee of elected representatives and municipal administrators and, working with others in the sector (community and family organizations, schools, the social services network and so on), to pinpoint measures liable to help families. These measures would affect day care services, housing, recreation, transportation, public safety, the organization of work and even the office hours of municipal services.

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13 QUÉBEC, MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES MUNICIPALES, **Agir pour les familles dans les municipalitiés,** Québec, October 1988, 7 pp. This document is recommended to municipalities by the Union des municipalités du Québec, the Union des municipalités régionales de comte et des municipalités locales du Québec and the Secrétariat à la famille. Other references include:

FÉDÉRATION DES UNIONS DE FAMILLES, "Famille et Affaires municipales", in **Le familier,** Montréal, January 1989, 12 pp.

CONFÉDÉRATION DES ORGANISMES FAMILIAUX DU QUÉBEC (COFAQ), **Qu'attendent les familles des municipalités?** Survey carried out among Québec families by the Confédération des organismes familiaux du Québec, in cooperation with its members, between February 20 and March 21, 1989. (Data compiled at April 7, 1989.)

QUÉBEC, MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES MUNICIPALIES, "Dossier: municipalité, l'enfant et la famille", in **Municipalité,** Québec, October 1988, pp. 1-10.

QUÉBEC, SECRÉTARIAT À LA FAMILLE, **La politique familiale et le monde municipal,** Québec, spring 1988 (folder).

Close to 100 municipalities throughout Québec have already responded to the invitation from the leaders of the municipal unions and, as an initial step, have appointed an elected representative responsible for family policy. Various municipalities have already acted to improve family life. Some issue bonuses for newborn babies; others have put a ceiling on fees for recreational activities and sports (such as baseball and soccer) for families with more than two children; one has implemented measures to help families acquire real estate. A family policy is well on its way to being implemented at the municipal level.

What municipal councillors and all decision-makers who **think family** need is something to help them evaluate the family content of policies, programs and measures they will be called upon to accept, amend or reject. Each municipality, in its own way, could then gradually integrate, in its own way, a family outlook into the administration of the services it offers the public.

2.5 The falling birthrate

Family policy hinges on demography. The Conseil de la famille is concerned about the situation in Québec, particularly by the dramatic drop in the birthrate. The importance and urgency of an overall population policy is clear, but the Conseil is convinced that a family policy is fundamental to a population policy. According to the Conseil, an increase in the birthrate should result from a sound family policy: with favourable conditions for new life and a lightening of the parental burden, families will multiply. The Cabinet is of the same opinion:

> **Family policy has its own purposes. We need this policy, regardless of whether the birthrate is declining or not. But if the family institution, the practice of parental responsibilities and an interest in children are promoted and held up by society and the State, we could be led to**

> **believe that this could affect birthrates. In this regard, the family policy could give rise to a population policy, even more so if it can ease the burden of raising children, which parents might often feel to be more a form of social punishment than a social contribution.**[14]

Choosing measures geared towards the family rather than towards the birthrate means working on all fronts at once: allowances, credits, parental leave, family recreation, housing, matrimonial regimes, the fight against family violence, and so on. Even if this approach seems less effective in the short term, it is more reliable in the long run. What is needed, after all, is a series of measures, a family policy, that will lead to a satisfactory and lasting increase in the birthrate.

However, given present concern for the size of the population, it would be worth verifying whether policies and programs reflect the reproductive function of the family. The desire for children is still strong among young parents. Policies and programs must therefore be evaluated in order to ensure that families that want more children are encouraged to have them.

2.6 The family approach

The family outlook, the decision to **think family**, should therefore increase the efficiency and effectiveness[15] of all government programs. To **think family** is useful and necessary, as shown in the following considerations.

- Changes in the family have an impact on our basic social institutions. The small size of the family, the increasing

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14 QUÉBEC, Secrétariat à la politique familiale, op. cit., p. 7.

15 See terminology, Appendix 2.

number of mothers on the labour market, and single-parent families are among the factors forging major changes in our social environment.

- Looking to the family through a family policy is a way of looking to the common good. The family is more than the sum of its members: it is an institution, a social environment,[16] an integral part of our common heritage.

- Policies and programs can have very different effects depending on the type of family and the aspects of family life they deal with. A step taken by the Director of Youth Protection can be welcomed in one area of Montréal and interpreted in another as an invasion of privacy.

- The strength of family ties and the importance of the family responsibilities that influence needs or restrict the options a family has are always present, although they may vary from one social environment to another. The solidarity that exists between different generations in certain immigrant families, for example, goes far beyond the reality of life in Québec today.

- The family, which accomplishes a great deal on its own, can act as a partner in providing social, health and educational services. All the members of a family play a vital role in preventing illness, promoting health, fostering success in school and developing a sense of civic duty. This is better understood than ever before, but rarely are parents given the information, the means or the recognition they would need in order to work hand in hand with professionals.

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16 QUÉBEC, Secrétariat à la politique familiale, op. cit., p. 6.

- The family is a valid unit to be considered in any analysis or evaluation, even if the success of a program is still based on the results obtained with individuals. There is a growing interest in the effects of programs on the structure and functioning of the families to which the individuals belong.

These considerations are the basis for six family criteria which will serve to verify the pertinence and coherence of any government or private family measure. These criteria will be explained further on; essentially, they may be phrased as follows:

stability--the commitment of spouses and parents must be encouraged and reinforced by appropriate programs and policies;

support--the strategy of policies and programs must reflect the desire to support and complement families in their work, rather than replace them;

strength and durability of family ties--family members influence one another and this fact can be used to support policies and programs;

competent partners--if families are to carry out all their duties, they must be allowed to play a role in policies and service programs for individuals;

diversity--the variety of families must be taken into consideration in policies and programs;

vulnerability--priority must be given to the families with the greatest psychological, social and economic needs.

CHAPTER THREE

EVALUATING THE FAMILY CONTENT OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Evaluation is one of the five interdependent functions of management: planning, organizing, accomplishing, controlling and evaluating. More specifically, **it is a set of activities through which the value of results is judged with a view to making a decision.** An evaluation indicates the extent to which the needs defined at the planning stage have been satisfied and reveals the presence of new needs, thus contributing to the modification of an existing program.

3.1 Evaluation

Evaluation is a characteristic activity of any well-managed undertaking, in either the private or the public sector. But a person does not become an evaluator overnight and an evaluation is useful only if it is carefully planned and carried out methodically and imaginatively. There is no model applicable to every firm or every policy. Each case, each program requires a made-to-measure evaluation.

In order to familiarize the reader with the concept of evaluation, its difficulties and its potential, there follows a brief overview of what has been done in government circles. In Québec, for example, where the role of the State has taken on increasing importance, expenditure has grown and programs have become more and more complex, government leaders realized that evaluation tools were required to answer two vital questions:

- Are we doing what we do well?
- Are we doing what we should be doing?

They saw the need to integrate the answers to these questions into the decision-making process. In the seventies, PPBS[17] was supposed to make it possible to evaluate some ten programs a year and draw up recommendations to be incorporated into the new budget. In the early eighties, the search was already on for a new method. In 1984, a basic policy for program evaluation was drafted, proposing that program evaluation be included in the government process for making decisions and allocating resources. This policy never saw the light of day although some departments have developed their own policies or, at least, evaluation activities.[18]

Until recently, most of the information available on evaluation dealt with resource management and allocation in terms of budgetary expenditure. Information on the results is rare and impact analyses are rarer still. This situation has arisen because of a lack of instruments for measuring program results and determining the extent to which the programs are responsible for the results obtained. Power struggles are also a factor, since evaluation is a political activity to the extent that the program evaluated may be at the heart of a conflict between different interest groups.

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17 Planning Programming Budgeting System.

18 See, for examples of government implication, the following documents:

Sylvie ALLARD, **L'évaluation des programmes,** ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Sainte-Foy, 1988, 20 pp. (This document was submitted at a symposium on quality control; it lists several examples of evaluation studies carried out by the department.)
Jean-René BIBEAU, Suzanne MESSIER, **Programmes d'accès à l'égalité dans les Commissions scolaires, Cadre d'évaluation,** ministère de l'Éducation, Québec, January 1988, 72 pp.
André LAURION, **Guide en matière d'évaluation de programme,** ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, Québec, 1988, 29 pp.

Ontario has obtained positive results since 1974, using Managing by Results, as has the federal government since 1978, thanks to the Office of the Comptroller General, but answering questions on the relevance, effectiveness, impact and long-term results of policies and programs remains problematic.

In Québec, the ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux provides an example of what is involved in regulation, one of the fundamental aspects of evaluation, dealing mainly with relevance and coherence. The ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux is not so much a dispenser of services as a regulator, seeing that the services network follows government guidelines and that the system as a whole produces the desired results: a task the Rochon Commission described as a monumental challenge.

3.2 Definition of policy and program

Before defining "program", it is important to determine, with Jean-René Bibeau, what is meant by "policy".

A policy is a document

- that sets forth the guidelines chosen by a person or group of persons in a specific field or sector,

- that formulates principles to follow in establishing priorities and designing programs and activities, and

- that spells out decision-making powers, the sharing of responsibility and the general organization.[19]

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19 Oral presentation

A program is thus an integral part of a policy. Specifically, it is a group of activities based on an objective or a set of objectives designed to produce goods and services with human, physical and financial resources, and change the environment in order to satisfy certain needs.[20]

A program bears the following relation to planning and results:

PLANNING	PROGRAM	RESULTS
	Objectives	
Needs and problems of a clientele	Structure of **activities** such as: extent of the program, means of action, level of resources, etc.	Changes in the needs and problems of the clientele
	Organized **resources**: procedures, protocols, rules, etc.	

The manager responsible for a program:

- supervises and coordinates resources,
- in order to produce goods or services,
- to satisfy certain specific needs of a clientele.

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20 This paragraph and those that follow are based on **Évaluation de programme, cadre de référence**, by Jean-René BIBEAU and Louise BUSSIÈRE, ministère de l'Éducation, Québec, January 1988, 23 pp.

His success can be evaluated to the extent that he can identify the following elements and tie them into the program:

- the clientele and its needs;
- program objectives, resources and activities;
- the results and their impact.

3.3 Definition of program evaluation

Program evaluation is the set of activites that makes it possible to measure and appreciate the effectiveness with which program objectives are sought, the impact of the program, its relevance and the efficiency of the means taken to carry it out.

The purpose of program evaluation is:

- to confirm a program or question it;
- to judge the results;
- to question the effectiveness of the means adopted to reach the objectives;
- to support and enlighten decisions on:
  - chosen strategy (conserving, modifying or replacing the program)--why?
  - program design (should other forms of action, other objectives, be considered?)--why?
  - organizing and carrying out a program (should the allocation of resources, the method of operation, the structure of activities, be modified?)--why?

Since evaluation is adapted to the information required to make a decision, the object of the evaluation depends on the type of decision or appreciation sought.

Program evaluation is designed to assess the following:

- program results:
  - its products: goods and services,
  - its impact: changes in the environment brought about by the goods and services;

- justification for the program:
  - needs to be satisfied,
  - principles of intervention,
  - objectives sought;

- methods of achievement:
  - resources,
  - organizaton,
  - operation.

Depending on what is being evaluated, the following types of assessment are possible:

- effectiveness, when results are being evaluated: effectiveness means the extent to which the objectives and the results they target are reached;

- relevance, when the justification is being evaluated: relevance is the degree of correspondence between needs and objectives or needs and results;

- efficiency, when the methods of achievement are being evaluated: efficiency is the relation between the quantity of goods and services produced and the quantity of resources used to produce them.

- impact, when the effects of the program, whether planned or not, are being evaluated: the impact refers to the changes in the environment resulting from the implementation of the program.

3.4 Evaluation framework

The public administration in Québec now refers to an evaluation framework rather than an evaluation plan or an evaluation estimate. An evaluation framework is a program management tool whose usefulness is highly appreciated.[21]

In the strict meaning of the term, a framework is a structure that defines and identifies content and highlights its characteristics. Specifically, it is a synopsis in which the information required to plan and carry out a relevant and useful evaluation is presented in an orderly manner.

The evaluation framework makes it possible:

- to obtain an overall idea of the program to be evaluated;
- to ask questions related to decision priorities;
- to plan to obtain relevant data;
- to prepare recommendations based on the objectives of the managers and the clienteles that will prove useful in reviewing predetermined aspects of the program.

Where possible, an evaluation framework should be produced for a program when the decision to evaluate it is made, in order to clarify the need for evaluation and initiate an evaluation process that will be relevant, clearly defined and specific to the requirements of decision-making. But an evaluation framework can also be useful as a planning element. Like

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21 This paragraph, and those following, are based to a large extent on **La notion de "cadre d'évaluation"**, Jean-René BIBEAU, ministère de l'Éducation, Québec, December 1988, 19 pp.

planning, which is primarily concerned with objectives to be met and emphasizes results sought or their effects, the evaluation framework is also concerned with the raison d'être of the program. It is:

> **a structured device for jolting the memory, so that the important points are kept in mind and so that both programming and coordination, as well as control functions, are always carried out with an eye to the ultimate goals of the program and the activity, and not simply to the strictly operational objectives related to the methods of implementation.**[22]

The best time for developing an evaluation framework is when a program is being developed or reviewed. It is possible, at that time, to project a global view of the program cycle while it is still a simple hypothesis: beginning with the needs identified, you imagine the anticipated results of the program and the points on which they should be assessed in order to start anew later on, and complete the cycle by referring to the needs once again. The main thing here is not necessarily the quantity of data used, but rather the respect for the steps involved in the process.

3.5 How to measure the direct or indirect effects of family-oriented policies and programs

There is a growing consensus to the effect that policies and programs should support families, reinforce them. But how should such things be defined? How can they be measured? The results of policies that affect individuals are often measured: How long did a rehabilitated alcoholic manage to resist temptation? How are the people who were treated with this or that medication? How many people found a job? How many students passed? But there are no tools for adequately measuring family behaviour. And even if information can be obtained from one of the members of a family, it may be incomplete or biased.

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22 Ibid., p. 16.

The people who design policies and programs that tend to have a positive effect on families must nonetheless be able to determine, in concrete terms, what effects they want to create and how those effects will be measured. This may imply very complex calculations, particularly if the cost/benefit ratio of a specific program is desired, for example.

In order to compare the cost of family therapy with that of individual therapy, for instance, it would be necessary to estimate, among other things, the cost of reinstitutionalization, and to try to put a price on the effects of therapy on the family members, on conjugal stability and so forth. Daunting, but not impossible.

CHAPTER FOUR

USING THE EVALUATION GRID

The family criteria and the eight stages of evaluation given in the Part Two of this document should be used as a guide--not as a model--and may be used in different places at different times, in the three levels of government and in the public and private sectors. They may be used to evaluate the effects of existing or planned policies and programs as long as, each time, the grid is adjusted to the object evaluated. A service for mothers who are victims of violence, for instance, cannot be evaluated in the same way as a housing assistance program or a tax reform. The grid must be adapted with the people responsible for evaluation, on the basis of the object evaluated and the type of assessment sought.

The following are examples of how the grid may be used.

- The family policy coordinator in a department[23] uses it to evaluate a draft policy prepared by the department.

- The parents' committee in a secondary school uses it to study the school board's new regulations in the light of the family criteria.

- The grid is used to make elected municipal representatives aware of the importance of basing services to the population on the needs of different kinds of families.

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23 The family policy coordinator works in a government agency and provides liaison between his agency and the Secrétariat à la famille. He must also coordinate in his own agency the modification of existing policies or the creation of new ones, in keeping with the principles defined by the Conseil des ministres.

- The Secrétariat à la famille uses the grid in studying draft government policies liable to affect the family. It verifies the family content of draft policies and advises the government on moulding its policies into a coherent whole. This is no mean feat, given all that is at stake and the many different values, personalities, objectives, methods and so forth that must be coordinated so that the efforts of all concerned, each with his own interests, strategies and powers, can be brought to bear on the same objective.

- Organizations interested in the condition of families use the grid not only to evaluate proposed government legislation affecting people with family responsibilities but also to better assess their own actions.

Family policy operates in a vast field, covering the following sectors:

- financial assistance to parents;
- adaptation of responsibilities at work to parental responsibilities;
- better housing for families;
- assistance for families in difficulty, through the extension of family counselling and the struggle against family violence;
- strengthening of ties between the school and the family;
- development of a more family-oriented approach in health and social services;
- child care services;
- development of family-oriented recreational and cultural activities;
- amendments to legislation so that it addresses the modern family.

The Québec government intends to adapt its action to the family situation in the cultural communities, among immigrants and among the aboriginal peoples.[24]

4.1 Rigour and creativity

Guides have been prepared describing the evaluation process, step by step.[25] However, the objects to be evaluated differ. There is no evaluation model that can be integrally reproduced and universally applied. Each situation or point evaluated is unique. Methods must be worked out that are applicable in practice as well as in theory. "Given our evaluation-oriented culture, it is important to select methods that take this constraint into account. Resources are limited. This too is a factor that must be considered..."[26]

Creativity plays an essential role in evaluation. One of the uncontested masters of the science--and art--of evaluation, Michael Quinn Patton, states that technical perfection is not sufficient to make an evaluation report useful. The methods learned in class or from a good textbook cannot replace the ability to communicate, to ask the right question, the sixth sense that weighs the imponderables and the judgment that discerns the most important element in a given situation.

This document is therefore a guide, not a model. You do not encourage creativity by dictating precisely how to do something, but by providing stimulation and inspiration. The

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24 This description of the sectors is based on the **Statement of Family Policy** of the Conseil des Ministres, Secrétariat à la politique familiale, op. cit., p. 11.

25 For example, **Évaluation de programme, Démarche,** by Jean-René BIBEAU and Louise BUSSIÈRE, ministère de l'Éducation, Québec, January, 1988, 29 pp. and André LAURION, op. cit.

26 Ibid, p. 17.

grid is not a series of rules to be applied blindly, but rather a source of ideas offered for reflection and experimentation.

4.2 The debate must continue

A consensus on the major family values was mentioned earlier. In fact, a large proportion of the population endorses the government's interest in family welfare. This does not mean that there is unanimous agreement on all the major issues. Even when acknowledged criteria are used, political and social policy come into play.

One of the most difficult issues is probably the question of where to draw the line between individual and collective rights. Respect for individual rights today makes it very difficult to establish norms promoting the common good. On the other hand, there is increasing skepticism as to the social and moral value of this approach for society. Fortunately, efforts are being made to create a better balance between the person and the community, without jeopardizing acquired individual rights.

The family, which, as a unit, is greater than the sum of its members, is the meeting point of the individual and society, the perfect testing ground, where all the attitudes that condition our social behaviour are created and developed. Family-oriented measures therefore have consequences for society as a whole and vice versa. The following questions, some of which are rather delicate, must therefore be asked.

- The Civil Code recognizes parental competence and authority; does this not mean that there are certain requirements that must be met if any action is to be taken with respect to a family member, especially if the member is under age?

- Does this parental competence and authority not require that the State make serious concerted efforts to enable people to better prepare for parenthood?

- To what extent is the State within its rights in taking steps to have families adopt a different behaviour? Should not family representatives participate in such a discussion?

- Must the State remain neutral vis-à-vis certain social changes that influence family life, so that families are considered equal and identical under the various social, economic, fiscal and legal programs? Should it promote a family model that fosters the stability of the parents, the children and family life itself?

- How can a family policy be developed which would respect the personal autonomy women have won and their right to maternity?

- What can the State do to support the meaning and value of paternity?

- How far can the State go in regulating minimum conditions on the labour market in favour of parents?

- To what extent should housing and environmental conditions be regulated to give parents the conditions and physical resources conducive to family life?

- Does not de-institutionalization and the movement to have families assume all their own responsibilities, both moral and financial, mean that the State must change its approach and resources must be reallocated?

- Should the increase in the birthrate be an objective of a family policy or a result?

- Does the State have any say in a couple's decision whether or not to have children?

- And so on.

Our laws and regulations give implicit but contradictory answers to these questions which society and the families that comprise it will have to study.

Obviously, all these thorny and contentious questions will not be answered in the near future. However, this does not justify inaction. When the government made a formal commitment to do something for the family and when it urged its partners to follow its example, it was announcing a new society where parents would play a frontline role. Both courage and action will be required to bring this project to fruition.

And action is expected. It will require a political resolve that will constantly be put to the test. For instance, the following questions must be answered.

- Who will invoke the legitimate notion of common good to reinforce the fight against violence in all its forms in our society, because this violence surfaces in the relations between members of a family?

- Who will start the fight against pornography because it has a negative influence on the relationship between men and women in our society?

- Who will arbitrate when departments quarrel among themselves because of special interest groups behind certain government projects?

- Who will stand up to promote better conditions for the numerous young people with no "future" who, for that reason, cannot think of starting a family?

- Who will have the courage to restrict experimentation with new reproductive methods, out of respect for life, human integrity and the unborn child?

4.3 Act family

Act family and think family must never be dissociated. This must always be kept in mind, for when interest in the theory of family policy turns to fascination, an enormous amount of time can be spent defining family policy, a particularly difficult undertaking since no two family policies are exactly alike. Even neighbouring European countries, such as Belgium and France, have widely differing family policies. In fact, experts say that, if you want to support families, you should not try to define family policy, but rather do something concrete for the family as quickly as possible![27]

Theodora Ooms, a respected specialist in impact studies in the United States, already believed, in 1984, that there is no point in perpetuating the ideological debate on family policy. She said that what was needed was a national commitment to introduce a family perspective into the development, implementation and evaluation of government policies.[28] It is obvious why, in countries where family policy is discussed, it is really a question of a group of policies rather than just one policy. Québec has chosen to adopt an umbrella family policy that will operate through many sectorial policies or programs which must be firmly coordinated on the basis of clear guidelines.

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27 Wilfried DUMON and Joan ALDOUS, "European and US Political Context for Family Policy Research", in **Journal of Marriage and the Family**, Vol. 41, No. 3, August 1979, p. 498.

28 Mrs. Ooms is quoted in **American Family**, May-June, 1984, p. 13.

The evaluation grid has the enormous advantage of forcing policy makers and program managers to ask themselves the right questions, review their priorities and help groups concerned with the welfare of families to ask other pertinent questions.

Over the past year, several initiatives that affect the family were taken in various departments: a day care service policy was drawn up, as well as a new loans and bursaries policy, the Civil Code was reformed with respect to the economic equality of spouses and budgetary measures for families and social aid, housing and work measures were introduced. All these sectorial initiatives have a direct impact on the family and should be the object of interdepartmental consultation, guided by the criteria proposed in the evaluation grid.

This document is seen as a first step in the right direction. Obviously, it is only a beginning and, as such, it holds a special place in the implementation of a family policy. With time and the cooperation of those who use it, the evaluation grid will be refined, adjusted to the various sectors and made increasingly useful. Probably it will have to be continually improved, since it was designed for families, which are themselves in constant mutation. It is hoped that researchers, in particular, will support this effort.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

CONTENT OF AN EVALUATION GRID

Excerpt from **La notion de "cadre d'évaluation"** by Jean-René BIBEAU, ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, Québec, December 1988, p. 14.

Creating an evaluation grid involves three operations that establish a solid basis for the evaluation.

Operation 1: To obtain information on and an outline of the program or activity. It is important to **know what you are talking about.**

This operation consists in creating an "identification card" for the program or activity by including the following information:

- the justification for the program or activity (background, needs, guiding principles, laws, regulations, planning, programming); it should be noted whether or not it is coherent in relation to other programs and whether there is a consensus on the program;

- the main terms currently used and applied specifically to the program or activity;

- the official and traditional objectives;

- the expected results and products and the desired impact;

- the operation of the program or activity (organization, structure, budgetary resources, roles and responsibilities of those involved).

Operation 2: To identify the stakes and issues that could determine future action. It is important to **know what to evaluate and why.**

This operation consists in preparing a "health card" for the program or activity:

- main preoccupations (relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency);
- evaluation objectives;
- priorities;
- analysis indicators.

Operation 3: To find an equitable balance between the evaluation objectives and the means of evaluation. It is important **to know how to proceed in order to evaluate efficiently and effectively.**

This operation consists in preparing an "examination protocol":

- the method for gathering data;
- the framework of analysis to be used;
- the feasibility of an evaluation;
- the preliminary planning for the evaluation.

It is not enough to update the various items on a day-to-day basis. They contain a wealth of information that must be processed as a block at the right moment in order to create the conditions that will guarantee the usefulness of the evaluation.

APPENDIX 2

TERMINOLOGY

The following terms are used in evaluation. The definitions given here are taken from **Évaluation de programme, Terminologie,** by Jean-René BIBEAU and Louise BUSSIÈRE, ministère de l'Éducation, Québec, January 1988, 12 pp.

ACHIEVEMENT

Set of activities designed to ensure that resources are associated and used economically in an operation, and that production respects legislative and regulatory requirements and the chosen strategies.

General results expected:

- coordination of resources,
- goods and services.

ACTIVITY

Program component consisting of various concrete, recurrent and measurable tasks, all of which contribute to the same objective within a specialized field of action.

Program activities complement each other in the effort made to obtain the results required to satisfy the needs. An activity is characterized by the specialized field to which it refers. It lasts as long as it

takes to reach the results in that field.

ANALYSIS — Set of activities to establish relations between raw data and produce information that will be useful in making judgments.

CLIENTELE — Group of persons with the same needs who want to obtain goods or services to satisfy those needs.

CONTROL — Set of observation and analysis activities designed to ensure that operations are in keeping with planned expectations, prescribed conditions for achievement, and legal, regulatory and procedural requirements, and that allow corrections to be made en route.

General results expected:

- judgments on whether operations are in keeping with laws, regulations and procedures;

- judgments on the economic use of resources;

- judgments on whether operations are in keeping with objectives;

- recommendations for adjustments to operations.

CRITERIA

Principle, reasoning or set of characteristics on which a value judgment is based.

ECONOMY

The principles underlying sound management that guide the manager in the acquisition and utilization of resources for attaining the objectives and that make it possible to avoid waste.

EFFECTIVENESS

Extent to which the objectives are met. Effectiveness is expressed as the relation between the results sought, by carrying out the objectives, and the results obtained. It is always expressed as a percentage since the value is obtained by comparing two similar objects.

Indicator: $\frac{\text{result obtained}}{\text{objective}}$

Example:

Result: 700 illiterate people can read after one year

Objective: to teach 1000 illiterate people to read in one year

The program was thus 70 percent effective.

Effectiveness also refers to the degree to which an objective is reached, its efficiency and impact being taken into account. In the expression "overall effectiveness", its meaning approaches that of performance. It is not expressed as a percentage.

EFFICIENCY

Relation between the quantity of goods and services produced and the quantity of resources used to produce them.

Indicator: $\frac{\text{goods and services}}{\text{resources used}}$

Efficiency is not expressed as a percentage. It is often associated with productivity, since productivity expresses the relation between the quantity produced and the production factors. However, productivity is always measured in terms of variation in this relation, based on observations made at two different times or in two different situations.

EVALUATION

A set of activities enabling the manager to judge the value of the results obtained, in order to make a decision.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Reference document combining in an organized fashion information enabling the evaluator to ask pertinent questions, collect reliable and relevant information and prepare recommendations based on the concerns of the managers and clientele that will prove useful in reviewing the designated aspects of the program or activity.

The results expected from an evaluation framework:

(a) information on the program or activity;

(b) the stakes and the issues that might direct future action;

(c) identification of the data required to make an analysis.

EVALUATION MANDATE

Written document by which a manager transmits his request for a program evaluation to the appropriate person. The mandate must specify the object of the

request, the evaluation priorities, the objectives, the questions to which an answer in desired and the deadlines, limits and constraints of the evaluation.

FAMILY — See pages 7 to 13.

FAMILY POLICY — See pages 10 to 12.

FUNCTION — Set of activities or operations given to a person or group in an oganization and constituting that person's or group's contribution to the attainment of the organization's objectives.

Roles, responsibilities and tasks stem from the function. The **role** is the set of actions and the behaviour related to carrying out the function. **Responsibility** is the obligation ensuing from the role and the function. The **task** is the set of actions a person must carry out to assume his responsibilities.

GOAL — Expression of the purpose of a program, used to formulate the objectives.

IMPACT	Effect, on an environment or a population, felt because an objective is being sought or a result has been attained.
INDICATOR	Relation between two values, one of which is a variable and the other a constant (reference value). An indicator is not a mere statistic that expresses facts in numerical form. An indicator makes a **judgment** possible on three points related to program evaluation: **relevance, effectiveness** and **efficiency.**
JUSTIFICATION OF A PROGRAM	Set of statements justifying the existence of a program, consisting of the **needs** identified in relation to a problem, the **principles** by which it is decided to satisfy them and the **objectives** sought.
MANAGEMENT	Management consists in exercising the various functions designed to associate and implement the resources required to produce the goods and services required to satisfy needs. Its functions are: planning, organizing, accomplishing, controlling, evaluating.

MODEL

Set of methods for data collection and analysis, adapted to specific judgment and decision-making needs and to the specific characteristics of the activity in question.

MONITORING

Process that consists in periodically, regularly or continually observing, supervising and analysing the progress of an activity in order to ensure that it provides the desired results, under the prescribed conditions, and to make any necessary corrections during the process.

NEED

Expression of a lack, or of requirements, in relation to a certain degree of satisfaction.

Ex: Learning to read and write is a primary need for an illiterate person in a literate society where communication is based on the ability to read and write.

NEED ANALYSIS

Systematic procedure that makes it possible, once a problem has been identified, to measure the discrepancy between an existing situation and a desired situation.

NORM

Set of characteristics on which several people have agreed and that, for them, constitutes a reference or yardstick to which they can compare their actions, behaviour and judgments.

The term "standard" is synonymous but refers more specifically to a specific requirement or degree of excellence.

OBJECTIVE

Concrete and realistic expression of a desired result (what?), referring to a specific time (when?) and place (where?), and including measurable qualitative and quantitative items, and that, at a given moment, should have been achieved by qualified people (who?) to satisfy a given need (why?).

An objective should indicate:
- **what** will be done;
- **why** it will be done;
- **who** will do it (the unit or person);
- **when** it will be done;
- **where** it will be done.

ORGANIZATION

Set of activities designed to identify and allocate the resources that should be devoted to seeking the objectives within an operational structure.

General results expected:

- an operation framework,
- production procedures,
- the attribution of roles, responsibilities and tasks,
- the distribution of resources.

Programming is often associated with organizing.

PERFORMANCE

Relation between expectations and actual achievement.

Actual achievement corresponds to the results obtained using a given level of resources, while expectations correspond to the results expected using a given level of resources. This level may be:

(1) a standard level of resources;
(2) a comparative level of resources that is not standard, or a level of resources chosen as an objective, independent of any comparison.
(3) a level of resources used previously for a result that was obtained.

Indicator: $\frac{\text{resources used x achievements}}{\text{standard resources x expectations}}$

Performance, like effectiveness, is always expressed as a percentage.

PLANNING

Set of activities designed to establish priorities, define objectives and identify achievement strategies based on available resources.

General results expected:

- priorities,
- objectives and corresponding expected results,
- methods.

POLICY

See p. 26.

PRINCIPLE	Statement of an initial proposal constituting a justification or an initial reason for standardizing action, behaviour and judgments. Ex: Equality is a principle which results in there being no differentiation in the educational services given people, on the basis of their sex, religion, language, etc.
PRIORITY	Characteristic that makes it possible to situate the accomplishment of an action in time and in relation to other actions.
PRODUCT	Goods and services resulting directly from the actions inherent in program activities.
PRODUCTIVITY	Variation over time, or from one distinct situation to another, in the relation between the quantity of goods and services produced and the quantity of resources used to produce them; or relation between the quantity of goods and services produced and the various production factors used over a given period.

PROFITABILITY	Relation between the value of the production factors used and the value of the goods and services produced.
PROGRAM	Group of activities or projects based on an objective or a set of objectives in order to produce goods or services, using human, material and financial resources, and change the environment to satisfy certain needs.
PROGRAM EVALUATION	Set of activities making it possible to measure and appreciate the **effectiveness** with which the objectives of a program are being sought and the **impact** of the program, its **relevance** and the **efficiency** of the means of accomplishing it.
PROGRAM REVIEW	Government budgetary process designed to allocate each year the resources earmarked for government programs.
PROJECT	Program component, made up of operations related to a specific production goal within an activity, that helps meet a need. A project is characterized by its extremely operational objectives. In principle, a

project lasts only a short while, since it ends when it delivers the product required of it.

RATIO

A mathematical operation relating quantitative data.

RELEVANCE

Degree of correspondence between the objectives and the needs to be met, or between the results obtained and the needs to be met.

It cannot be expressed as a percentage.

RESOURCES

People, things and financial means used to produce goods and services. Under certain circumstances, time is also considered to be a resource.

RESULT

Products and impact obtained by seeking an objective.

The expression of an expected result or of a result that has been obtained should specify:

- the **products** (goods or services) made available as a result of the project;
- the **date** on which the products became available;

- the **characteristics** (quality, quantity, criteria, etc.) of the products made available;
- the **impact** of the project and the products.

YIELD

Relation beteen the real level of production and a theoretical or reference level of production.

Yield is often associated with performance assessment.

PART TWO

Criteria for evaluating the family approach, for use by families, companies, organizations, municipalities and departments

The evaluation process described here[29] is a frame of reference for government action as well as for action by groups responsible for providing support for families. It is based on the family content of policies and programs and, at the same time, on the principles put forward by the Conseil des ministres on December 3, 1987. The main steps in using the evaluation grid are:

(a) establishing family criteria or guidelines for evaluation;

(b) using these criteria to evaluate the family content of policies and programs;

(c) proposing changes to policies and programs, where necessary, to adjust them to the orientations set forth in the Statement of family policy.

After describing the eight steps of the proposed process, the Council will explain the six criteria it recommends and propose for reflection questions that could be asked to verify whether these family criteria are being respected.

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29 The Conseil obtained permission to use and adapt to the Québec context **A Strategy for Strengthening Families: Using Family Criteria in Policymaking and Program Evaluation**, Family Criteria Task Force, Theodora OOMS and Steven PREISTER, Editors, 1717 K Street, NW, Suite 407, Washington, D.C., U.S.A., 1988, 92 pp.

CHAPTER ONE

THE EIGHT STEPS IN THE EVALUATION

The main question is: HOW DOES THIS POLICY (EXISTING, PLANNED OR UNDER REVIEW) AFFECT THE FAMILY?

This question must be broken down into a series of sub-questions that explain it and render it more concrete. It is not a matter of answering each of the proposed questions, but rather of choosing the most relevant ones and, where necessary, formulating others. The main thing is to see that the following steps are respected in the overall process:

1. identify **the families** concerned;

2. determine which **functions**, which actions and which other aspects of the family are affected;

3. verify which **components** of the policy or program under evaluation affect families;

4. select the **impact questions** that will help to decide the extent to which family criteria are being met;

5. **summarize the data** gathered and determine how the components of the policy or program affect the various types of family;

6. submit the **findings**;

7. formulate **recommendations**;

8. plan the **implementation** of the recommendations.

1.1 First step: identifying the families affected by the policy or program

Families vary according to their structure:

( ) two-parent families
- ( ) married
- ( ) de facto spouses

( ) one-parent families
- ( ) the parent is the mother
- ( ) the parent is the father
- ( ) shared custody

( ) nuclear families
( ) extended families
( ) families with one or two children
( ) families with 3 or more children
( ) families of origin (ancestors)
( ) families of procreation (descendants)
( ) birth families
( ) adoptive families
( ) substitute families
( ) scattered families
( ) separated families
( ) blended families
( ) multi-generational families
( ) families with members with special needs
( ) other

The number of families affected must be determined as precisely as possible.

The stages of the family life cycle

( ) future parents (families expecting a child)
( ) families with pre-school child(ren)
( ) families with school-age child(ren)
( ) families with young adults
( ) families with elderly parents

Heritage

Ethnic:
Religious:
Linguistic:

Socioeconomic situation

Income:
( ) none
( ) one
( ) two
( ) multiple

Income level:
( ) low
( ) middle
( ) high

Education:
( ) little
( ) average
( ) higher
( ) university

Community environment

( ) rural
( ) village
( ) suburban
( ) urban
( ) inner city
( ) metropolitan
( ) isolated

Socio-sanitary milieu:

( )
( )
( )

1.2 Second step: determining the functions, actions and other aspects of the family that are affected by the policy or program

The following functions may be affected by the policy or program:

( ) Family formation: couple, marriage, birth, adoption, divorce, death

( ) Procreation

( ) Economic suppport and welfare: providing food, shelter, clothing and other necessities of life

( ) Education: providing knowledge, abilities and social and life skills

( ) Health: promoting good physical and mental health

( ) Protection of vulnerable family members: providing for the emotional and physical well-being and safety of sick, frail and troubled family members of all ages

( ) Social responsibility: teaching respect for social rules, norms and codes

( ) Affection and caring: providing mutual care and intimacy and promoting self-affirmation

( ) Identity: fostering a sense of family, ethnic, community and national identity

( ) Cultural socialization: transmitting values and traditions

( ) Religion: expressing faith, fostering worship

( ) Recreation: facilitating entertainment, leisure, diversion

1.3 Third step: verifying which components of the policy or program affect the family

The following points will assist in determining exactly which elements of the policy or program affect the family.

Level of administration involved:

( ) municipal
( ) school
( ) regional
( ) provincial
( ) federal

Legislation

( ) laws
( ) orders-in-Council
( ) jurisprudence

Regulations

Standards and guidelines

Funding:

( ) terms
( ) reimbursement
( ) incentive or disincentive

Administrative practices

Service delivery:

( ) private or public sector
( ) professional or office staff
( ) objectives, training, union affiliations
( ) accessibility: hours, location
( ) coordination with other programs
( ) sensitivity to families' needs and realities
( ) nature of relationship with family

( ) Related policies and programs

( ) Related laws and court decisions

Public opinion	Parental opinion
( ) favourable	( ) favourable
( ) unfavourable	( ) unfavourable

1.4 Fourth step: selecting impact questions on the six family criteria

At this point, reference is made to the sample questions on each of the six family criteria proposed in the following chapter, namely:

- encouraging and reinforcing parental and marital commitment in order to promote family stability;

- supporting family functioning rather than providing substitutes for it;

- recognizing the strength of family ties and the influence family members have on each other;

- treating families as competent partners;

- recognizing family diversity in structure and in size;

- targeting vulnerable families, that is, those with the greatest psychological, social and economic needs.

It is up to the people using the evaluation grid to select the questions best suited to the situation. They may also adapt questions to a specific context.

1.5 Fifth step: summarizing data

The procedure followed so far implies the gathering of large amounts of data and continually checking back to the questions and various program components that affect different kinds of families. Depending on the priorities, the evaluation could be limited to reviewing data already gathered, or, if the time and resources are available, it could require new relevant data, such as statistics or quantitative data.

1.6 Sixth step: submitting findings

Once the data has been gathered and reviewed, it is important to draw some preliminary conclusions. These must address:

(a) the kinds of families affected by the policy or program;

(b) the specific functions of family life affected by the various program components;

(c) the results of the evaluation.

The conclusions must be shared with any other persons who have been involved in the study, including family representatives, so that they may express their opinions before the final recommendations are formulated.

1.7 Seventh step: formulating recommendations

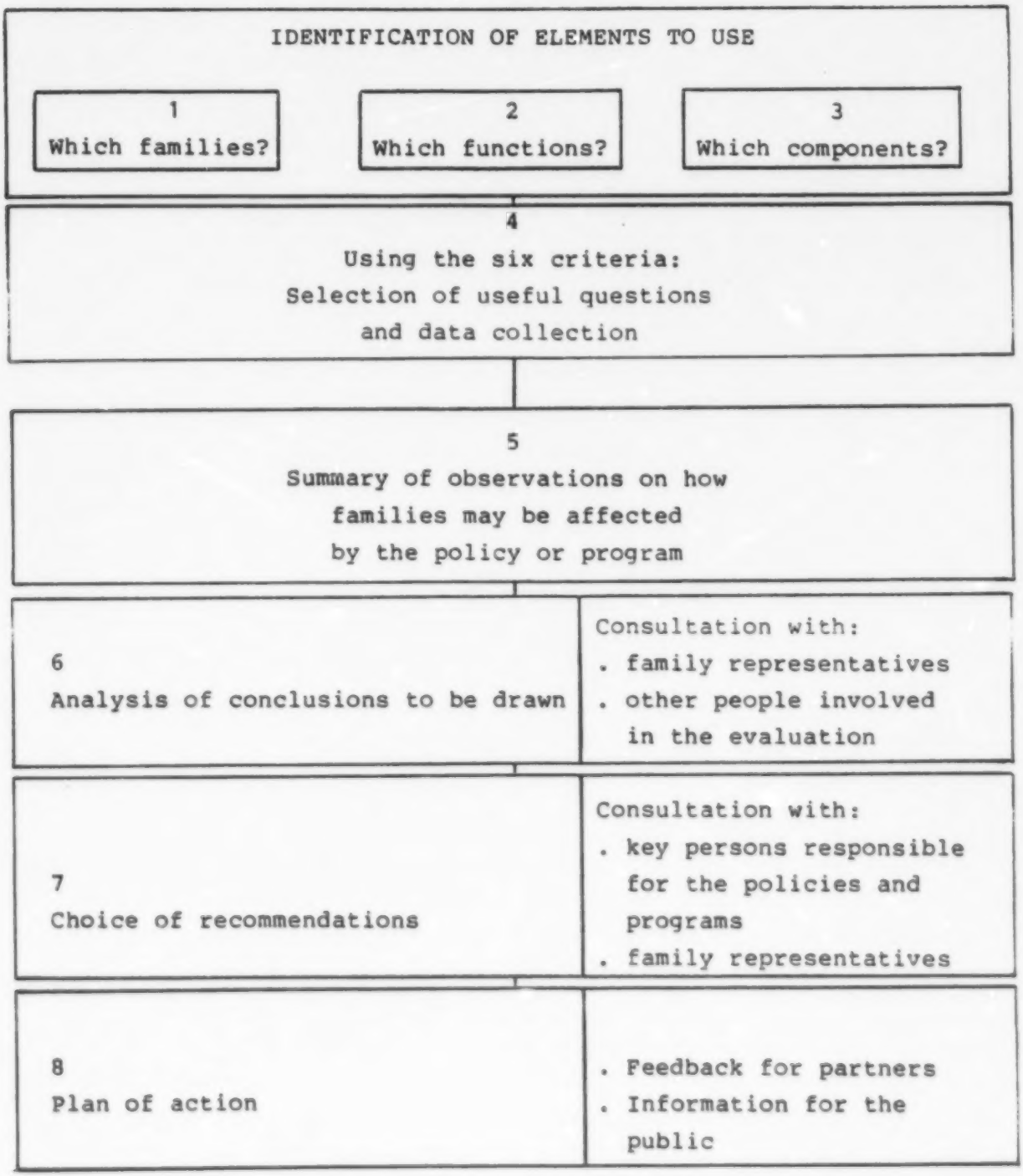
Specific and feasible short and long-term recommendations should then be formulated for each level of government and for any other groups involved in the implementation of the policy or program. At this point, it is very important to meet with key people responsible for the policy or program, and with family representatives.

1.8 Eighth step: implementing the recommendations

A plan should be developed for the implementation of each recommendation. It should include feedback to the participants of the study as well as information for the public. Implementation should be evaluated periodically or monitored on an ongoing basis to see if adjustments need to be made.

A diagram of the process proposed is given on the following page.

DIAGRAM OF THE PROCESS



CHAPTER TWO

FAMILY CRITERIA

An overview of relevant sources in family science, political sociology and family service brings to light certain basic principles that imply value assumptions and can be used as criteria in evaluating policies and programs from a family perspective. There are six such criteria which must be carefully described.

2.1 First criterion: Policies and programs should encourage and reinforce family, parental and marital commitment and stability.

One of the justifications for a family policy is that the welfare of society is dependent on the welfare of the family. Society has therefore everything to gain by seeing that the family does not collapse but continues to function adequately.

This first criterion is aimed at couples with children: the stability of their union is important for the well-being of their children, who need to see their parents as a united couple, and who are entitled to have access to both parents. This criterion also refers to parental commitment which must continue despite all the setbacks that can affect the couple itself.

While continuing to respect any different legal status parents may have, the program must support and encourage parental commitment as well as the marital commitment that underlies it, and promote family stability, while taking into consideration realities such as family diversity (criterion 5) and the geographical mobility sometimes required by the labour market.

An action that modifies the composition of a family or its organization would be justified only if required to protect one of its members or in response to a request made by the family itself.

Sample questions

- How does the program strengthen or weaken parental commitment?

- How does the program enhance or diminish parental competence?

- To what extent does the program ease or impede the family's decision:
  (a) to change its composition, through divorce or separation, for example?
  (b) to have children through birth or adoption?

- Does the program recognize that major changes such as divorce or adoption are processes that extend over time and may require continuing support and attention?

- Does intervention in the family through placement of a child or adult family member in alternative care settings such as a reception centre take place only as a last resort after sufficient efforts have been made to keep the family together?

- What resources are allocated to help keep the family together?

- What criteria are used to guide decisions that remove a child or a dependent adult from a family?

- What criteria (for example, long-term advantages, family-like environment) are used to determine what alternative care will be most appropriate for the dependent member?

2.2 Second criterion: The first presumption of policies and programs should be to support and supplement family functioning, rather than substitute for it.

The family is the most varied and most enduring of institutions. It is also the institution that satisfies basic needs. One of the first goals of a family policy is to help families perform the functions for which they are best equipped, and perform them well.

It must be understood that the State is not denying its responsibilities towards families when it leaves them to help their own members. That, after all, is a fundamental responsibility of the family itself. A consensus has not been reached on all forms of mutual assistance. There may be formulas that would allow the State and the family to share responsibility rather than leave everything to the one or the other. The State should take over from the family only when the family is unable to function or when the burden on the family is excessive.

A family policy should also encourage the mutual support families can give one another. This **family solidarity** has become indispensable in our day, since many families no longer have the network of relatives on which they could depend in the past. At one time or another, all families need advice or help that can be given more effectively and often less expensively by an understanding family than by a government agency. Recent experience with family violence has demonstrated the irreplaceable role of family solidarity. But how can the

support the State already gives community organizations be increased without robbing them of the autonomy and vitality that are essential to their role?

Sample questions

- How does the program help families carry out their responsibilities and prevent the State from interfering and diminishing family responsibility?

- How far does the program go in supporting fathers and mothers and helping them fully assume their roles?

- Does the program set unrealistic or inappropriate expectations for family members who are assuming financial or caregiving responsibilities for seriously ill or disabled children?

- Does the program provide incentives for other persons or institutions to take over family functions?

- Does the program help families assume their roles and so strengthen their ability to help themselves, to support their members?

- What effect does the program have on the ability of families to manage financially?

- To what extent does the program enforce the obligation of absent parents to provide financial support for their children?

- Does the program build on or ignore informal support networks and mediating structures such as family, community and neighbourhood organizations or churches, which are so essential to the daily life of the family?

- To what extent does the program encourage and support adults in the decision to care for ill or disabled parents or relatives?

2.3 Third criterion: Policies and programs must recognize the strength and persistence of family ties, even when they are problematic.

When someone takes action to help an individual, he must keep in mind the influence the family has on that person, and realize that any change in that person will rebound on the whole family. In dealing with alcoholism, for instance, a good deal of attention must be given to the non-drinking spouse, and even to grown-up children. A change in family relations, a birth, an adoption, a separation or the departure of a child, for instance, must not be viewed as an event limited in time, but as the trigger of a process to which each family member must adjust in his own good time. This criterion is rooted in a systemic view of the family: personal problems are created and resolved with and by the family. This is not to say that someone may not require personal therapy, as in the case of incest or battering, butit is often the family context rather than the symptom that requires attention: the system of interpersonal relations must be changed to ensure that the symptom does not reappear later on.

Generally, the best way to help someone is to encourage the involvement of other family members. In this way, the family reinforces the program objectives rather than undermining them.

Sample questions

- How does the program recognize the role family members play in contributing to or alleviating an individual's need for service?

- How does the program address and balance individual needs, the needs of the individual in relation to his family, and the needs of the family as a whole?

- How does the program recognize the extent and complexity of the responsibilities involved in caring for family members with special needs (for example, seriously disabled or chronically ill)? How does it recognize the impact of these special needs on other family members and on certain aspects of family life?

- How does the program treat competing needs within the participating family or between different families?

- In such situations, on the basis of what principles are program decisions made (for example, the best interests of the child)?

- What are the program's assumptions about maintaining confidentiality between family members, for example, between an adolescent and his parents?

- On the basis of what principles is confidentiality respected or sometimes breached?

- How does the program help individuals and their families anticipate and deal with changes brought about by the service given the individual?

- How does the program facilitate mediation between family members in cases of family conflict?

- How does the program promote the family as a mediating structure between its individual members and social institutions?

2.4 Fourth criterion: Policies and programs must treat families as partners when providing services to individuals if families are to fulfill the various tasks society expects of them.

Families must be given the information and resources that will empower them, insofar as possible, to exercise their rights and participate in decision-making where they are concerned. The protection of their rights is particularly important as regards education, health services for children and, especially, custody of children. Policies and programs must recognize that the persistence of mutual support between family members depends on the family; each family must be free to develop the forms of mutual support that suit it.

In Québec, participatory decision-making on major issues is well entrenched, in theory at least. The ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, for example, suggests the following definition of partnership in its mental health policy, a definition that is well adapted to the third and fourth criteria:

> Partnership presupposes the concerted mobilization of individuals, those around them, workers, the community, and public and community resources. It implies three conditions: recognition of the respective potential of all partners, open lines of communications between the partners, and the adoption of common goals.[30]

The purpose of policies and programs is to build and strengthen this partnership, which is particularly important for families in isolated areas. Unfortunately, everyday experience does not always reflect this ideal. The Comité de la consultation sur la politique familiale noted an urgent

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30 QUÉBEC, MINISTÈRE DE LA SANTÉ ET DES SERVICES SOCIAUX, **Mental Health Policy**, Québec, 1989, p. 32.

request from families for new professional approaches designed to assist them.

Policies and programs should treat all families with trust and respect when providing housing, recreation, legal services and so forth for family members, and should offer a range of levels of involvement depending on the family's wishes and situation. Families must learn to use their power. To this end they must be given adequate information and the opportunity to make choices and decisions.

Policies and programs should take into account the complex responsibilities of families and enhance their ability to manage their dealings with multiple service agencies.

Sample questions

- Do the written materials about the program state that families are partners, or do they tend to marginalize or limit family involvement?

- To what extent is family autonomy respected by the program and the family left to make its own decisions?

- On the basis of what principles is family autonomy breached and program staff required to intervene to make decisions?

- How does the program concretely broaden the choices and options of the participating families?

- In what ways does the program give families the information they need to fulfil their responsibilities and make their choices?

- How do the program professionals see their role vis-à-vis the families to which they offer services? Do they see themselves as healers, experts, consultants, helpers, mediators or providers of goods and services?

- In what concrete ways does the program seek to involve participating families in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the program?

- How does the program recognize that some families can and will get more involved in the partnership than others?

- How does the program give all families the opportunity to get involved, at least minimally?

- In what way does the program prevent participating families from being subject to humiliating circumstances or circumstances that suggest that they have an inferior status, thus depreciating and stigmatizing them?

- Does the program hamper or assist families in their difficult responsibility of coordinating multiple services and orchestrating the many interlinked aspects of their lives?

- Does the program recognize multi-family groups?

- Is the program designed to enhance their image or to quietly suppress them?

2.5 Fifth criterion: Policies and programs must recognize the diversity of family life.

Policies and programs must respond to the various forms of family life, since the objective of a program that suits a one-parent family will not necessarily suit a two-parent family. Variables such as structure, stages of the family life cycle, ethnic, racial, cultural, linguistic and religious differences, socioeconomic level and neighbourhood solidarity must be taken into account.

Family policy must recognize the family's contribution to procreation and ease the parents' decision to have children.

This attention to the various types of families is in no way discriminatory or contrary to the principle of equality. If equality means the same treatment for people in the same situation, its corollary, as currently interpreted in Québec, is that people should be treated differently to the extent that their situations differ. Equality does not mean treating everyone in the same way, but respecting human dignity and promoting greater justice.

Sample questions

- Is there an explicit or implicit preferred family structure in the program?

- Does the program build in rewards or penalties for one-earner versus two-earner families, single versus married people, married versus divorced or separated couples, married versus de facto couples? Are these preferences and incentives justified?

- Are there any explicit or implicit assumptions in the program about what is considered normal or desired family functioning? How are these expressed?

- Is the program equally accessible to families with different structures, at a different stage in the family life cycle or with different cultural expectations and values, for example, families with employed parents versus families with homemaker parents?

- Does the program encourage small rather than large families? Does it enable parents to have as many children as they desire?

- Does the program take into account the differences in ethnic and religious backgrounds of participating families when addressing needs or objectives?

- How does the program enable families to be more effective in handing on their own values and traditions?

- Can ways in which the program is not sensitive or is prejudicial to different family values be identified?

- In what ways can the program build more effectively on the values, attitudes, resources and strengths of particular ethnic groups to enhance family functioning?

- How does the program direct itself to the needs of individuals and families at specific stages of the family life cycle?

- How does the program take into account the differences in family environments (inner city, urban, suburban, village, rural)?

2.6 Sixth criterion: Policies and programs should give priority to the more vulnerable families, that is, the families with the greatest psychological, social or economic needs.

Ever since the first laws were passed to provide direct help to needy mothers, less privileged groups have often been the target of our social policies. This tendency has increased recently through the creation of selective rather than universal programs. However, at the same time as the problems themselves received more attention, the conviction grew that preventive action would be more more effective. Prevention

has never carried the weight it logically should. There is an ever greater consensus that part of the annual budget must be earmarked for prevention so that a situation does not deterioriate to the point where it undermines family life or demands drastic action which should be reserved for exceptional cases.

Sample questions

- What efforts are made to indentify and target those families that are the most vulnerable and the most in need of support?

- To what extent is the program specifically directed toward low-income families?

- Are there sliding fee scales so that families from different socioeconomic groups can use the program acccording to their ability to pay?

- To what extent are eligibility requirements for the program unjust in that benefits or services are denied to families who are just above or below the minimum level of income?

- What is the effect of these arrangements?

- Are families who care for members with special needs (seriously disabled, chronically ill) given sufficient support and respite to enable them to continue to assume the major burden of care?

- Are efforts and resources designed to prevent family problems from becoming serious crises or chronic situations?

- Are these resources sufficient?

- Has the cost of remedial services compared with that of preventive action been evaluated?

It must be remembered that these criteria are simply guidelines for determining the quality of policies and programs designed for families. There are doubtless others that would cover changes in the family context and the social context in which they evolve.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

When the Conseil de la famille decided to solicit public reaction to this document on the family criteria that would help Québec society **think and act family** it committed itself to using those same criteria as a basis for its observations of the family in Québec.

Making the best possible use of the staff and financial resources it has at its disposal, it will make the contents of this document known to its collaborators, to families, to community and family organizations, to firms, to municipalities, to government agencies and departments, to universities and to the major social networks. It will also promote the contents, especially by setting up awareness and training activities.

The Conseil recommends the following to the Minister responsible for Family Policy:

- that the Québec government be brought to adopt the family criteria developed in this document as guidelines for any action it takes with respect to families, in order to translate its commitment to **think and act family** into concrete action;

- that the Secrétariat de la famille be mandated to develop a practical evaluation tool for public administrators, the program planners and departmental coordinators for family policy that would enable them to verify the family content of any policy or program that directly or indirectly affects families and parental responsibilities.

THE CONSEIL DE LA FAMILLE
1988-1989

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